# The COMMONWEAL

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## *Conspicuous Shortages*

LEON HENDERSON, Price Control Administrator, at least can talk tough. He says the "honeymoon months" of the defense boom are about finished. "Every person will be touched, and many will be touched harshly, by the defense program. . . . All I can tell you is that only by sweating blood and tears can the dislocations be held to a minimum. No exactly similar paradox ever confronted American business. Customers, ready, eager and able to buy, will be crowding the market places and stores, but manufacturers will be unable to get enough raw materials to satisfy demands." What this means is: for ten years we have had plenty of goods people have not been able to buy; now they are able to buy plenty of goods we haven't got. The economy of scarcity is just around the corner; it has not come because we planned it that way, but because there are suddenly so many bullets and bombers and battleships to be made that we can't make ice boxes and cars and electric toasters. If this were merely a pleasant paradox, to parade for the admiration of men, like the tag at the end of an O. Henry story, it would be bad enough. But the worst of it is what it presages for a more distant future, when the bills for the currently popular inedibles must be paid, and paid by men who will not have the money to buy in markets once again plentifully stocked. It looks as though no great nation can choose guns over butter without forcing the rest of us to make the same choice. Men are the slaves, not the beneficiaries, of conspicuous waste.

## *July 14—in New York*

EACH YEAR on the national holiday of any nation its citizens who find themselves in foreign lands remember their country and gather round its official representative to celebrate its founding, or its liberation. In the long past day of peace this was an annual occasion on which those not generally favored with invitations to diplomatic festivities were treated to a glass of champaigne, and some remarks on their nation's grandeur.

With war abroad the character of such meetings this year in New York is altered. For no people more than for French citizens. There were, for them, two receptions from which to choose, mutually exclusive and deplorably so. M. de Sieyès, as personal representative of General de Gaulle, received for the Free French; M. d'Aumale, Minister in charge of the Consulate General, received for France. According to the newspapers, three hundred attended the first reception, two hundred the second—and four thousand, in the evening, a mass meeting of "France Forever" at which spoke Secretary Ickes, Newbold Morris, Professor Hoffher and others.

The French who went to M. d'Aumale's residence heard no speeches: they were there to share the silence and anxiety of imprisoned France. The French who chose to go to M. de Sieyès took the grave decision to break with the government of their country in order to serve their country as they judged best: they were there sharing in the hopes of those individual Frenchmen who in Africa—yesterday in Syria—and in England are fighting with the British against Germany and at times, with what must be most heavy sorrow, against their own compatriots. Naturally, as Americans, we have not to appraise their choice.

The French who fought the war have paid: outside France, the French who are faithful to their government are paying and suffering for that fidelity: the French who have joined the British are paying. All have assumed their responsibilities. But the Americans who, on July 14, made up a great part of the crowd of four thousand who attended the France Forever meeting in the evening have made a choice for which they are not paying and which is an irresponsible choice. They have chosen to make others pay for their enthusiasm: the French in France, by cutting off supplies; the French with de Gaulle by urging them to fight what they say is America's war. Unless their vicarious heroism is quieted they will cause a dismayed French nation to believe, indeed, that it must seek to exist as best it may in a Europe from which American friendship has withdrawn.



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### *Eternal Vigilantes*

THE 1941 report of the American Civil Liberties Union provokes reflection. Our concern over civil liberties has roots far deeper than those watered by philosophic liberalism. Liberals want freedom of speech and action because in substance they believe that out of conflict comes progress, that there is operative an intellectual survival of the fittest, which alone enables mankind to approximate truth. Hence their strange axiom that one religion is as good (or bad) as another; that every man has a *right* to his opinion. The deeper roots of our American insistence upon civil liberties penetrate many layers in the soil of our history. From their earliest days the English-speaking colonies were made up of heterogeneous peoples. They differed in cultural origins—English, Irish, Dutch, French, Swedish, German. They differed in religious belief—the "dissidence of dissent," Quakers, Church of Englanders, Baptists, Catholics. A large measure of liberty was the only guarantee of internal peace. It took a hundred and fifty years to secure any general assent to the proposition that "liberty is the best policy," but that consent came, and thanks to vigilance has been largely preserved. And beneath this reason of policy and prudence, there is also a more fundamental Christian reason for civil liberty: the deep antagonism in principle between Christianity and the forcing of consciences. No principle has more often been abused by Christians, yet it is there: "For you, brethren, have been called unto liberty."

All these reasons more or less go against the grain of nature; the liberal is easily tempted to be illiberal with all who oppose him; the American easily reconciles himself to denying civil rights to aliens, to Negroes, to the poor and the weak; the Christian is constantly tempted to replace sanctity by the sword. The defense, then, of the principles and machinery of liberty is ever an unpopular cause. It is therefore a thankless task of surveillance which the American Civil Liberties Union sets itself. It has insisted upon the rights of labor, upon the rights of Henry Ford. It has been a friend of the court on behalf of Bundists and Communists. It insists that Lindbergh can hire a hall, and college students demonstrate for peace. Occasionally what we believe to be a doctrinaire view inspires its actions: it opposes "release-time" for religious instruction in the public schools. But the vast bulk of its activity is in a sound tradition, the loss of which would make our country a far worse country than so far she has been.

### *All-American Incident*

THE ABOVE HEADING, as applied to the episode of Lieutenant General Lear and his yoo-hooing command, is meant to indicate not that the matter involves the whole of the Western Hemisphere, but that it has an exclusively American flavor. There is something native and authentic about having a row over army discipline start with a group of girls playing golf in shorts. And each succeeding happening fits into the national pattern and, we suspect, nowhere else. As everyone now knows, General Lear was golfing in mufti on the same Memphis course being used by a party of girl golfers in hot-weather clothing, when a motorized battalion of his troops rolled by and was moved by the sight of the shorts to yoo-hoo. They also, unconscious of their commander's identity, and perhaps envying his situation, offered to caddy for him. He allowed them to go on to their destination—Camp Robinson, in Arkansas—and then ordered them to return to Memphis for a disciplinary fifteen-mile walk under the almost hundred-degree sun. It is not recorded that the soldiers did anything in particular about it—except, of course, walk fifteen miles—but some members of Congress were stirred to the core of their being. There were speeches featuring the taxpayers' money, vigorous young American manhood, the parents of army men, grouchy golfing generals. In upshot, the War Department (dissembling, we imagine, a good deal of ennui the while) has ordered General Lear to make a report. Our sympathies incline to the General, though we think five miles would have been enough. We imagine his action will bear salutary fruit far beyond the Second Army. Meanwhile a California regiment has challenged the punished ones to a marching race, their letter ending with the taunt: "Out here the girls yoo-hoo at us"; and informal spokesmen for the Second Army have publicly invited "politicians" to let it alone. Whatever anyone may say, our country is in a healthy state. All this is as reassuring as a good vigorous knee-jerk.

### *Governor Talmadge Defends Superiority*

ACCOUNTS in the Northern press of that July 14 meeting of the Georgia Board of Regents which brought the dismissal of Dean Walter D. Cocking of the University of Georgia School of Education and of President Marvin S. Pittman of the Georgia Teachers' College were very stark. The two men had been charged, and were charged again with insinuating such things as racial equality—with working against the superiority of the white man. It is an old story, and just what Northerners ought to do about it is uncertain. Pressure from the North probably has some good long term effect, but it is, probably, a crude pressure tending toward the self-righteous and oversimple, and is likely unappreciative of what progress has taken place, and what objective and subjective problems block the path. It is happy to note, therefore, what real Southern force was martialed in behalf of a more Christian and

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human conception of Negro and White races. There were the two prominent dismissed educators themselves. The first hearing of the Regents overrode the Governor by eight votes to seven. Even after three substitutions were made in the Board of Regents, the final vote was only 10 to 5. Southern friends of the Rosenwald Fund stood in the midst of the firing. The president of the University of Georgia spoke against the ouster. The news reports, indeed, made it look as though the history of American racial relationships were getting ahead of the Talmadges, and that the South, as must be, is furnishing leadership.

*Defend America by . . .*

WALTER J. STACK was a fraternal delegate from the San Francisco branch of the Marine Firemen, Oilers, Water Tenders and Wipers Association of the Pacific to the Cleveland convention of the National Maritime Union. There he said:

> It stands to reason that any democratic convention that takes the stand that we must give full support to any force that fights fascism, will give its complete backing to that individual in America who has led the fight against fascism, who will continue to lead the fight against fascism from now on, and that is Earl Browder.

The NMU convention adopted a resolution demanding immediate review of "all cases of imprisonment in which technical violations have been used as a pretext to do away with the rights and civil liberties of our citizens." This includes, of course, Earl Browder, now in Atlanta for passport fraud. Since the resolution condemned especially the Rapp-Coudert committee, it presumably also includes the recently sentenced Mr. Schappes of the New York school system, whose "technical violation" was merely perjury.

The NMU convention failed to pass two resolutions introduced by Joseph J. Doyle, delegate from the S.S. *Ancon,* owned by the Panama Railroad Line of the federal government. One of these resolutions proposed that the union invest its strike fund in government defense bonds. The other asked for an open inquiry into charges of communism against officers of the union. The New York *Post,* strongly pro-labor, commented:

> To hear Joe Curran tell it, Mr. Doyle is a "stooge" bent on smashing the NMU at the "hire" of the labor movement's enemies. That's Mr. Curran's way of denying his Communist Party membership. Perhaps the method goes well in a convention hall, but we would prefer to hear Mr. Curran's explanation of these facts. . . .

The *Post* then lists eight evidences of Curran's nearness to the Communist Party, ending up with this: "Photostats of receipts of Curran's dues payments to the Communist Party have been published along with replicas of Curran's contributions to various minor communist 'causes.'" The question of Mr. Doyle's motives and friends may be important in one way, but it does not affect the question of the legitimacy or usefulness of his resolutions. A very nasty man can say that two times two equals four. On returning from Cleveland, Doyle was barred from taking up his job on the government ship by action of the union crew.

What are you supposed to do with communism, which you don't like, when it gets messed up with the labor movement, which you want to support with all your heart? It seems you still have to try to make distinctions, to disentangle them.

NOW ENGLAND and Russia are allies and have a pact which rules out a separate peace with Hitler. The quotation from Mr. Stack above apparently covers the situation for the all-out-aiders. It is very simple indeed. Still, what seem to be the logical tools which have been used to wind up America's clock until the country runs on to commit itself to fighting for communism as it exists in the world? First, perhaps, is the proposition that we must protect the United States and her interests. Second, beat Hitler who threatens the United States. Third, defend England which blocks Hitler. Fourth, defend the USSR which turns Hitler from threatening England which blocks Hitler who threatens the United States.

Some terms or links in this chain are false or oversimplified, or else the country ends up with the confusion of fighting at one and the same time both against social injustice, etc., and in defense of social injustice, etc.—against nazism and for communism. It would be possible to go back and elaborate on the first proposition, about protecting the US and her interests. But analysis of the second link might prove more fruitful: Beat Hitler! That is not a simple concept. For of what is Hitler a leader and a symbol? First of all, a spiritual force antagonistic to sound philosophy and to religion and Christianity. Secondly, an historical trend involving military, political, economic and all sorts of social tendencies and choices. In the spiritual war, Stalin is no ally. In the struggle against totalitarian social forces, communism is in the camp of the enemy. Just as communism is a basic enemy of the domestic labor movement.

Increasingly it is demonstrated that the negative purpose of beating Hitler is not an adequate foundation for national policy. Taken as an absolute, it leads to supporting the very evils which constitute the bad part of the nazi tyranny. We can think of as many simple old saws as the next man, but we still can't find a formula of peace terms which we would welcome and which Stalin could also greet with honest favor. If Churchill can see the formula, let him say what it is, and then let Americans decide what they think about it. As Wavell, Auchinleck and now Vansittart get ready to receive the new AEF on Europe's battlefields, it might not be out of order to figure out what the AEF is supposed to bring back.

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# *Russia at War*

## Russian needs and the Russian future.

*By* **Helen Iswolski**

IT IS indeed a bewildering paradox that part of the defense of freedom against totalitarian tyranny should now be entrusted to a government which was the first to establish totalitarian tyranny. Should the Red Army prove victorious, and hurl Hitler back beyond the Russian frontiers, would the communist machine, once set into motion, spread its domination everywhere? Instead of liberation, would it bring even a worse form of slavery?

Nothing, however, seems less certain than a decisive victory of Stalin over Hitler. The latter has chosen his hour and has carefully studied his plan of attack, whilst the Kremlin leaders have apparently been taken unawares. Moreover, the conditions of industry, agriculture, transportation are as yet extremely unsatisfactory in Soviet Russia; as for the psychological factor, so important in war, it is even more uncertain than the military and technical one. The Russian people, subjected for twenty-four years to a régime which breeds hatred and distrust, will scarcely be likely to offer this régime their moral support. Hitler's victory may be of course a short lived one, and Russia may win in the long run. But even if Russia wins, this does not mean that Stalin will win. And if Stalin loses, this does not mean that Russia will lose.

Close observers of Soviet military and industrial organization have little doubt as to the final issue of the present invasion. And even if the immense masses of the Red Army escape encirclement and succeed in slowing down the *blitzkrieg,* the chances of Stalin's victory remain extremely problematic. Thus it seems scarcely necessary to consider the eventualities of communist triumph inside or outside Russia.

### *Internal developments*

To those who have been attentively watching developments in the Soviet Union during recent years, Hitler's success to date came as no surprise. The increasing weakness of the Kremlin régime became obvious long ago. Even Stalin's imperialist policy, his annexation of Polish, Finnish and Bessarabian territories, were but seeming triumphs, entirely due to the international situation and to Hitler's own bold scheming. During the Finland campaign this weakness had already manifested itself and had caused serious anxiety among the more patriotic elements of the Red Army's high command. Stalin himself experienced a feeling of insecurity. A well informed journalist returning from Moscow in the spring of 1940 wrote that "the Finland campaign had shaken the Soviet Dictator's throne."

This weakness was the consequence of remote causes and of a "complicated convergence of responsibilities." It was the consequence of Stalin's systematic destruction of all the energies of the Russian people, of all that was alive in Russia. It was the consequence of a régime essentially defeatist, in so far as it broke down the combative power of the country, demoralized the political, military and technical staffs and awakened the people's secret, but stubborn and ever increasing opposition.

The nazi "anti-red crusade" is obviously a convenient slogan destined to hide the Führer's own aims, which have little to do with the spirit of Christian crusades. His aims are the colonization of Russia and her complete subjugation. Hitler's victory means the eclipse of Russia for many years; it also means that Germany will lay her hands on the Ukrainian granaries, as well as on iron ore, coal, oil and other immense Russian resources.

This is what Hitler is hoping will happen in the near future. But will Russia allow him to achieve his aim? A powerful revival of the Russian national spirit, which has manifested itself recently and more than once at the critical hours of Russian history, is still possible, and may check the invader's plan. Seemingly, even Stalin has felt the strength of this national spirit in late years, and has had to adapt his line of policy to it. It may offer unexpected resistance and continue the struggle, even after the occupation of vast portions of Russian territory. And it may especially become active if the fall of Stalin puts an end to the communist régime.

### *What has happened*

In order to understand what is happening in Russia, and has been happening there during recent years, it is essential to make a distinction between the Bolshevik régime and the Russian people. It has been often said of this people that



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it passively accepted communist dictatorship and allowed its spirit to be profoundly altered and corrupted. This all too current analysis of an extremely complex process of reaction and counter-reaction is superficial. In fact, for twenty-four years the Russian people has stubbornly resisted communism.

Thus the entire history of forced collectivization of the land, imposed by Stalin, is that of a lasting struggle. The peasant masses in all parts of Russia rose against the hated *kolkhoz* system, imposed by violence and terror. The Bolsheviks themselves were obliged to admit that this struggle often took the form of civil war, and that Stalin's methods of collectivization led to famine, disorganization of agriculture and the destruction of live stock. Finally the Kremlin leaders were obliged to make certain concessions, and allowed the peasant a limited acreage of "private" land, a small amount of "personal" cattle and fowl. However small, these concessions went against the grain of the initial scheme of total collectivization.

The same process of resistance could be observed in religious life, which withstood the numberless assaults of the godless campaigns and anti-religious propaganda. Not only was religious life never destroyed, but it gained through persecution in intensity and depth. It is a well established fact that the teachers of materialism have been unable to uproot religious feeling in Russia, while the godless movement is gradually losing strength, and is but a bureaucratic organ deprived of all dynamism. In the present emergency Stalin himself has recognized this and has appealed to the Metropolitan Sergius to offer prayers for Russia's safety.

Communism aimed for years at the destruction of national feeling and at the implantation of internationalism. In Russia, it sought to suppress all national and historic tradition. Yet national feeling has remained alive in the soul of the masses. The deep sufferings and the fierce struggle brought about by revolution and civil war awakened the people to a new consciousness of their country. Stalin himself was obliged to acknowledge this rising flow of patriotism, and to utter in his speeches and proclamations the long-banned word: "Fatherland." His revolutionary enemies have even accused him of fostering Russian nationalism.

This revived national feeling is indeed penetrating the entire culture of contemporary Russia. The great national poet Pushkin is being read and studied throughout Russia, and counts far more admirers than the Soviet writers inspired by official Marxist doctrines. During the Finnish campaign, the soldiers of the Red Army carried in their kits the works of the Russian classic authors. The spread of education among the peasant and working masses has made them familiar with national history; they have learned to know and admire such national heroes as Peter the Great, builder of the Russian Empire, Marshal Kutusov, victor over Napoleon, and Prince Alexander Nevsky, who repulsed the Swedish invader, and is at the same time one of Russia's most venerated saints.

In 1936 it would still have been possible to use these energies for the consolidation of a new-born Russian state. There had arisen a new élite: commanders and officers of the Red Army, headed by Marshal Tukachevsky, who, besides being an expert military chief, appeared as the very incarnation of a new Russia, eager to free herself from the fetters of Marxist dogma: experts, technicians, engineers, talented writers and poets, aviators and explorers, priests and monks, conscious of a revived Russian church purified by martyrdom.

The time had come to recognize the facts, and to make peace with these elements, and with the masses which stood behind them, instead of keeping alive their hatred and distrust. Stalin's lieutenants, like Rykov and Bukarin, belonging to the old Bolshevik school, but having a clearer vision of Russian realities than Stalin himself, warned him. So did new men, like Marshal Tukachevsky and the generals who worked with him.

The reforms needed can be summed up as follows: the transformation of the *kolkhozes* into free agricultural cooperatives and the enlargement of each peasant's plot of land; the emancipation of trade-unions from state control; the development of religious and cultural life, liberated from the chains of Marxism and atheism; the establishment of a political system based on the free vote; the creation of a national army without Party and GPU interference.

Instead of effecting these elementary reforms, Stalin destroyed the latent energies and aspirations of the Russian people and of the cultural élite. The execution of Marshal Tukachevsky and his collaborators dealt a heavy blow to the Soviet high command and weakened the combative power of the Red Army. Severe purges were inflicted upon technicians, scientists, writers, trades union men. Anti-religious propaganda became more violent. Prisons and concentration camps engulfed all that was best in Russia. The long promised constitution, which was to be "the most democratic constitution in the world," turned out to be a mockery. Between 1936 and 1939, Stalin wrought a second communist revolution, shattering all that had been patiently built up by the long suffering Russian people.

### *What is needed*

Already, in 1937-1938, Hitler was aware of the new catastrophe which had befallen Russia. He immediately recognized that here was the opportunity of striking at Russia as he had planned

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long ago. Indeed, the author of "Mein Kampf" had clearly indicated that the way of German conquest lay eastward. Hitler's ideological expert, Rosenberg, in his "Myth of the Twentieth Century," expressed a similar doctrine, steeped in an even more bitter hatred of Russia. In his opinion, the Russian people belonged to an inferior race, was corrupt and degenerate, and deserved only one doom: enslavement. Events forced Hitler to postpone his drive on Russia, and in 1939 he offered his friendship to the country he intended to colonize.

Thus, Russia had for a time escaped her doom. Stalin was lulled into a feeling of security by the European war and his own easy victories, and was certain of being able to double-cross his new ally. It seems, indeed, that had not Hitler chosen to attack Russia, Stalin would have continued his policy of Machiavellian shrewdness. On the very eve of the war he was ready to make concessions to Hitler, thinking that his "wait and see" policy was certain to win in the end.

But now that war has brutally put an end to this policy, the only way to organize resistance and to save Russia is to appeal to her people, so long ignored and ruthlessly chained down. This is what Stalin has done in words. He has even ordered the formation of a people's army, as did Alexander I. But he must do more. He must grant the urgently needed reforms described above, make peace with the élite and the masses. So only can Stalin turn the present war into a profoundly popular war, and create a powerful and dynamic national movement.

Will the Kremlin finally understand this urgent necessity, and if it does understand it, will it have time to accomplish the great task of a complete moral, political, economic and military overhaul? If not (and it scarcely seems possible that such an overhaul could be achieved now) Stalin and his collaborators will be swept away. They will either be swept away by Hitler, who will establish in their place his own puppet government, or they will be swept away by the Russian people, resolved to continue resistance and to gain their way to freedom.

### *The present*

For the present, dark clouds gather on the Russian horizon. The defeat of communism, though it can but be welcomed, does not diminish the terrible tragedy which has befallen Russia. Every true Russian patriot naturally feels deep pain and anguish at the idea that the immensities of Russia may suffer dismemberment, humiliation, perhaps utter enslavement. Every true democrat, to whatever country he belongs, will surely share this pain and anguish; he will deplore the fate of a great nation, whose people has struggled for freedom only to be subjugated by two ruthless dictators. This nation has preserved the Christian spirit in spite of a formidable anti-Christian assault, and is now once more threatened by a new form of paganism. Moreover, Russia has largely contributed to the world's spiritual and cultural heritage; her thinkers, writers, scientists have opened new vistas and enriched humanity. Therefore she deserves, in spite of Stalin's mistakes, which are not *her* mistakes, all possible help so that she may still, in the long run, cause the defeat of the nazi invader.

For the forces which have resisted Stalin are still alive in Russia. These forces will surely resist Hitler. Even if the *blitzkrieg* proves a success, this resistance will continue to manifest itself. Hitler will not be for long the master of Russia, just as Stalin has never really succeeded in dominating her completely.

And even now Russia is not passive. She is heroically struggling, offering her body to the terrific blows of the nazi war-machine. Even as during the World War of 1914-1917, she is retaining enormous masses of German troops on her fronts; she is giving Great Britain a breathing-spell, and allowing the RAF to send her bombers deep into Germany. Hitler, contradicting himself, has started a war on two fronts, which he himself proclaimed the greatest danger to German conquest. Who knows whether, in spite of his present success, this danger will not become more acute in a near future? Meanwhile, Russia is sacrificing hundreds and thousands of her sons; the most terrible wounds are inflicted on her in a struggle which may appear almost hopeless today, but which tomorrow may help the world to achieve peace and freedom.

On the day of victory, this must not be forgotten. Neither must the fate of communism and that of the Russian people continue to be linked together. Communism will die; but Russia, liberated from her internal and foreign enemies, must enter with all other free peoples the new order of peace and justice, and join the common task of world reconstruction.

## *Leafage of Snow*

How would the green lush growth encounter frost
With odor and decay.
Therefore rejoice that leaf and blade are lost
Before death's hands are on the season crossed.
Nature is much more easily embossed
With all but the simplicities away.

And man, as well, invites the matchless fair
When he is stripped and shriven.
When all that grows of earth lies gaunt and bare
Then is the hour auspicious to prepare
For the white foliage of upper air,
The snow that falls from heaven.

JESSICA POWERS.

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# *The "War" Behind the War*

## What military efforts can do and what they can't.

*By* **Donald Attwater**

WHATEVER the ultimate causes, and even the proximate occasions, of the present world conflict, there can be no doubt that the peoples opposing the Hitlerian régime are convinced that they are struggling for (among other things) the immediate preservation of such principles as public and personal freedom, public and personal honor, compassion for the weak, defenseless and unfortunate. Nor can it be doubted that, whatever the crimes of their own individuals, nations and histories, that view is, as against nazism, true (to what degree it can continue true in the concrete as the war goes on is another matter).

But little enough attention is given to where we got those principles, in the abstract and in such degree of actualization of them as we have been able to attain; it seems to be taken for granted by many that their profession is a natural characteristic of democracy, or of English people and Americans, or of such other parts of the human race as have allowed themselves to be enlightened, not by God, but by some blinding wisdom inherent in mankind. So far as Europe and America are concerned, we have in fact to thank Christianity for these values; they are, whether one calls oneself Christian or not, an inheritance from our Christian tradition. Nor were they an arbitrary selection from among other values, chosen by the fathers and doctors of the Church for their human usefulness or consonance with the Christian *ethos*. No; they were an essential part of the gospel, of that good news which Christianity taught, resulting from man's God-given nature and his relationship to his Creator. Freedom is essential to us because without freedom there is no responsibility, and without responsibility we are as dead things, we cannot perfect ourselves ("Be ye perfect . . .") or freely help others for man's last end, the enjoyment of God. Our "glorious liberty" binds a man to keep his word, "whether," as has been said, "to his wife or his treaty, not because someone has decided that would be a good plan, but because as a child of God he is dealing with God's children in God's way." We try to be compassionate not merely because the light of injustice and suffering is painful and displeasing, but because we are members one of another; God calls on His children to behave brotherly, we have to help our neighbor because he is in need, therefore, ultimately, for God's sake—". . . ye did it unto *Me*." And these things are absolutes, not depending for their validity on circumstance and expediency, especially not the circumstance of our own convenience: they are in fact quite specially imperative when the exercise of one's own or recognition of another's freedom, or the honoring of one's pledged word, or kindness in mind and deed seems to be against the interests of oneself.

That idea of man and his destiny has never ruled the world, it has never been unchallenged, by theory or practice or both, in any part of the world at any time. In the so-called ages of faith most men in Europe gave assent, real or notional, to Christianity, but those ages in some aspects displayed outrages on freedom, honor and compassion as worthy of Jenghiz Khan or Timur Leng as of Hitler or Mussolini or Stalin—for instance, Frederick Barbarossa, the Fourth Crusade, serfdom. Over against the Christian view of life there has always been what the gospels call "the world," that is, human society and human lives ordered otherwise than to God, involving denial of absolute values, the reign of expediency based on self-interest, coercion of individual persons by the rulers or other strong ones in the collectivity, the only ultimate principle in public affairs being the immediate interest of the state, such interest being itself conceived in terms of worldly success, often only for a few. With the Renaissance this false humanism came into increasing control (Machiavelli set out its statecraft in a magistral work), and its exponents were, and still are, found almost as much among professing and even sincere Christians (e.g., Louis XIV, to come down no later) as among those who disregard or formally reject the religion of Christ.

### *Not unexpected*

There is nothing unexpected or unexplainable about the twentieth-century dictators, they are no worse monsters of iniquity than many of their predecessors: they are simply more logical and consistent, and have greater technical facilities in implementing their false-humanist view of life. Hitler does not persecute Jews, dishonor treaties, kill the defenseless and innocent, knowing such deeds are evil: he believes they are in the circum-



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stances good, they are "for the welfare of the state." He believes that freedom, honor, compassion are wrong, at least when conceived as absolutes. Why do we think, nay, know, that he is wrong? Because, at the best, we are Christians, at the worst the unconscious heirs of Christian tradition.

Beneath the conflict between "totalitarianism" and "democracy," between "Great Britain" and "Germany," between this set of temporal interests and that, there is a greater, subtler conflict going on, the nineteen-centuries-old struggle between the Christian and the false-humanist views of life now come once again to a cataclysmic crisis. This struggle being spiritual, the two sides are not clearly defined and conterminous with the sides in the visible temporal struggle, however great a preponderance there may be on one or the other; but there can be no neutrality, no "isolationism" here, and those who are uncertain where they stand have got to make up their minds. If mankind be of no particular significance, if the world be no more than a "fortuitous concatenation of atoms," if there be no God or if He can be mocked with impunity, then Hitler is as likely to be right as anybody else—or rather, there *is* no "right," but only "various ways of making the best of a bad job." But if man be made in the image and likeness of God, if our Father sent His Son into this world that we all might have life and have it more abundantly, if good be the will of Absolute Perfection and evil a negation with appalling positive consequences, then we have to take our stand and act accordingly. To defeat totalitarianism in war may be necessary: but it will be a completely sterile victory, the blood and the tears and the destruction will have been a useless waste, unless the false-humanist view of life be also defeated—and the two victories do not necessarily go together.

God is concerned with men and human societies, not with states and sovereignties or even, in the loose sense that we use the word, with "ideologies." From the Christian point of view the only significant defeat is "that defeat of evil which leaves the evildoer convinced of the error of his ways"; the only victory worth having is the victory of God's "ideas," when, therefore, both sides win, one by confirmation, the other by conversion. And, it has been well said, "it will not be easy to make a war lead to such a conclusion." For, though it is possible that it is sometimes needful to defeat an evil institution by physical force as a first condition of changing it and to prevent it doing further harm, nevertheless the changing of it is a moral and spiritual process, which can come about only by moral and spiritual means. Laws and police, excellent devices for keeping order, are useless for bringing about an authentic and free change in convictions about God, man and the universe, nor is even direct moral persuasion by itself sufficient—some persons are completely impervious to it. "The Church knows the secret of transmitting spiritual goods and communicating spiritual realities"; such changes as these can be truly and fruitfully made only by love, by example, by suffering and by humble prayer, by identifying ourselves with the sinner and knowing that we share his sin, cooperating with and depending wholly upon the grace of God. At times and in places there have been individual Christians and groups of Christians who have sought to attain spiritual ends by the use of worldly means—the shocking results of their activities are in some cases with us still.

It seems to me that, with the continued extension and ever-growing insistence of the temporal struggle, many of us Christians are in danger of losing sight of the "'war' behind the war," of concentrating solely on triumph in arms, with an unformulated inference that then "all other things shall be added"; or, if we are fully conscious of the spiritual conflict, of putting all our trust in democracy, in the technical freedom of now subject peoples, in the utter impossibility that the bare fact of a military defeat for totalitarianism would ensure a rejection of false-humanism both by victors and vanquished. That danger is the excuse for these rather elementary observations. But there is a further danger, and that is of an attempt to use Christianity as a means to other ends.

During the middle ages the frequent identification of churchmen with political power led to the use of that power for religious and ecclesiastical objects; in modern times, the boot has been on the other foot: "Anti-clericalism," said the French anti-clerical, "is not for export"—and indeed it wasn't: those who, like the present writer, have had some first-hand experience of how certain governments tried to make use of foreign missionaries from their countries will know of that example. But the worse trouble is that we Christians sometimes fall into the snare: when, for example, Lord Eustace Percy writes (in *The Spectator,* November 17, 1939), "The future of Europe depends upon the future of the Christian faith. That is a political fact." Or Mr. Algernon Cecil (in *The Tablet,* May 24, 1941), "That cooperation of spiritual power and sea power, which could do so much for Europe . . ." we smile complacently or even applaud vigorously—whereas we should then especially be on our guard.

### *Restoring Christendom*

There is a lot of talk going on about a restoration of Christendom, and did that mean simply a restoration and extension of the Christian faith and values and institutions, well and good: that is what all conscious Christians want. But it often

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does not mean simply that. Happily there is no prospect of any return of a religio-political unit such as the medieval Christendom was: I say "happily" for, however needful and suitable it may have been in the middle ages, it is not only no longer practicable politically, but also religiously we are no longer satisfied by the idea of "Christendom" as a closed corporation, those outside the juridically-conceived boundaries of which are esteemed infidels and barbarians, and discriminated against accordingly. We are again widely conscious of the Mystical Body of Christ, and we know it is not identical with the visible body of the Church; we know that Christians can learn from non-Christians; we know that religion and secular politics do not make a good marriage. But we must beware of any revival of the medieval idea. It raises its head in the suggestion of a European *bloc* of Latin countries, wherein Christianity would be equated with the Catholic peoples of those countries and every effort would be made to clamp the local churches tightly to the state. In a less obvious form it can be detected in the unqualified identifying of Christianity with the anti-totalitarian powers, and the zeal of certain politicians, themselves not professed or practicing Christians, to emphasize the irreligiousness of totalitarianism.

There is a real danger, even among Catholics and other Christians, of an attempt to use Christianity as a *means* toward the restoration of order, honor, peace and prosperity to Europe and the world. This is a colossal impiety, a blasphemy, and nowhere has it been better answered than by the secretary of the (Protestant) International Missionary Council, Dr. William Paton, in his "Message of the World-Wide Church." "Not merely is it undesirable or unworthy or irreverent: it is strictly *impossible* to do so," he says. "To return to the Christian faith in order to regain the lost community of Europe is to nurse an illusion—unless, of course, we are thinking of Christianity as a respectable institution belonging to a certain phase of culture and useful in prolonging that phase. But if by Christianity we mean that life which depends upon the humble and joyful recognition of the act of God in Christ for man's redemption—and that is what we ought to mean by Christianity—then manifestly that is not to be used as an end to something else. 'He that saveth his life shall lose it.' To choose some good end—as in this case the saving of European civilization—and to seek to use the strength of religious conviction to secure it, is not only wrong, it is futile. The life that was to be saved is not saved, it is lost. There is only one way to save life, and that is to throw it to the winds in the service and devotion of something that is truly absolute. Christendom could not be reconstituted to save the European tradition and culture, but a recovered Christian faith would breathe new life into Europe."

If there be truly a "'war' behind the war," and if every ounce of real Christianity, in whatever denomination and whatever nation, must "mobilize," not for destruction and death but for affirmation and life, then it can be for only one reason and one end—because Christianity is true, absolute truth, God's truth. If the establishment of that truth in action would lead to temporal disaster for ourselves, we should nevertheless be bound to exert all our efforts to establish it. But we have God's word that it shall not so end: *"Quaerite primum regnum Dei et iustitiam eius, et haec omnia adjicientur vobis."*

# Church Mice And Men

By J. A. McGURK

THE Rocky Mountain Ranger of Souls, and the "Terrible Three"—Albert, Teresa and Johnnie—with Pa and Ma, are here again. After a two months' absence the missionary knock is heard. Albert, seventeen, with the harsh voice, does the formal announcing: "The priest is here," and the big farmhouse reverberates as the message is relayed from basement to attic: "The priest is here," and every second voice wants to know: "Is he hungry?"

Well! I am! And the sight of Albert with a fork in one hand and that inevitable flashlight in the other, frying three venison chops on the stove, spurs me to my favorite task. I cut off a nice steak, push Albert over a bit and grill a perfect *pièce de resistance*. The family takes my apostolic freedom quite as a matter of course.

All assemble for supper. Conversation does not start in low gear. With all the sirens sounding and full speed ahead, it careens crazily, from the alleged theology of high heaven to the natural philosophy of the barnyard dogmatician.

I am simply the feeble referee for the most part. Ma says: "Have some bread! It ain't good this week!" I gallantly affirm it as fine, but Pa is no time-server: "No, it is not good. It is not like the bread in the Old Country." "Why not?" says Ma, bristling a bit. "Well! It's not mixed right, the dough, like we did it; for we mixed it with our feet."

Mrs. gives a cry of dismay and he hastens to explain: "Yes! It was in a big vat; our feet were clean, we clipped our toe-nails. What difference if you wash your feet or wash your hands? Nobody can work it by hand like a man can with feet. Hard work was done by feet and not by hands."

I felt his preliminary argument was good, but she didn't and she offered as a crushing blow against the truth of this alleged fact: "Why, you'd get stuck and fall down and break your neck."

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The referee felt forced to rebut, gently but firmly: "Not in dough, Madam!" As an obbligato to the particular disputation, various minor conversations wage, several dogs are intermittently ejected with protests, cats mew for meat, but Pa imperviously struggles on and emerges victorious; herself quickly covers up a retreat with a new charge, as I quietly proceed with the vesper meal.

"Them mice in Church have half eat your blankets and the vestments will be next." This is bad news indeed for I dislike mice heartily—ever since I put my hand into a nest picking grapes in a vineyard—and "reposing tonight on my pallet of straw," who wants to intrude on a private family of mice?

Albert reaches up on the shelf for a mousetrap and snaps it by my ear—not just once—but with a perpetual pizzicato, and I grimly munch on, resolved not to murder him just yet.

Johnnie, fourteen, bursts out: "I've-got-the-best-mouser-in-the-world" (he picks up the cat champ—a very ordinary looking feline) "look—feel him—he's fat—why—'cause he's plumb full of mice—that's why—run your hand over him—see for yourself."

I do not choose to run my hand over any mouse-filled cat, especially during meal time; but John brags on while the dad patiently but perseveringly proposes poison—for the church mice. (Albert is still snapping the noisy little trap.)

The cat, as it was for Dick Whittington, seems to be the favorite and I agree. Suddenly a common thought seems to strike them all at once, voiced by the Mother and reechoed by all: "First you take a box filled with ashes . . ." I wonder what form of trap is this and the wonder must show on my face—for all, with remarkable delicacy, fall silent for a moment and let me personally figure it out. I do! Light dawns. The riddle of the ashes is solved. From far back in my memory of "Willie Willis" days comes the solution; for it was always to me the call was given that: "The cat's been behind the piano!"

They unanimously perceive this light of practical comprehension illuminating my dull face and proceed to plan out the church rodent round-up—with Pop still putting out his patient plea for poison.

By this time I just don't relish any more food. I have had a genteel sufficiency anyhow, I think. The family is slightly confused as I say grace. There is a division both in posture and cooperation.

The gas lamp is the center of evening social life. It is pumped up and lighted—after a frantic search for the pump. If you go to any other room you're in Stygian darkness, but I grope my way to a radio for a little peace and quiet.

This quiet is soon dispelled by a fearful squall from the lamp-lit kitchen. Mid the general din, I hear a raucous roar about "pulling hair out of somebody's head." I dash to the rescue, and there is Albert wrapped up in a sheet, dancing about with tears and groans—and by the evacuated barber chair, clippers in hand, looking slightly sheepish, is Ma, the master-barber of the family.

I stay on to gloat over the Albertine nemesis and to join the group about the kitchen table. Teresa, twelve, is learning by parrot-memory "In Flanders Fields." I try to teach her the "analytic-synthetic" method; but it's a total loss. She drones on, with every emphasis accurately misplaced, and a stubborn far-away look in her eye. Then she picks up a battered catechism and uses her own method again.

I feel I also should do something spiritual, and in spite of momentary danger of conversational conflagrations I open my also-battered Breviary to do a little "anticipating," thank God!

Little did I reckon with my unpredictable hosts and specifically Albert. What sponsored the idea doesn't matter, but soon he too was near the table with bare feet and a large, dangerous-looking pair of scissors. We both commence our task.

"Psalm I"—"Blessed is the man . . ." and—snip—a fragment of toe-nail lands unpleasantly near.

"Psalm II"—"Why have the Gentiles raged . . ." and an odor not of roses nor yet of sanctity permeates my present position.

"Psalm III"—"O Lord why hast Thou multiplied those who persecute me . . ."—the snipping and whiffing are too deadly and I not only retreat to the rear end of the table but refrain from my pious burden of the morrow.

After all I have promised to try to say the Breviary with dignity, attention and devotion, and my attention is distracted to some theological problems lustily threshed about with more energy than accuracy. Incidentally I try a few very masterful card tricks (white magic seems a unit in many a missionary bag) and though the "terrible three" are completely baffled, on principle they cry: "It's a fake."

That peculiar glint in the eyes of the Mother tells me a "high-explosive" is about to drop. She always reminds me of what Cardinal Newman said: "Ten thousand difficulties don't make one doubt," but it seems to me she has already, like Xenophon, marched out her ten thousand to the point of exhaustion—for me at least.

She clears her throat—as sure a sign as decks clearing for action: "You know, Father, that our married girl Anna is expectin'" (I didn't know it, but a juvenile titter up the table tells me they did) "and" (here a powerful pause)—"the Doctor says she'll die havin' this second baby and he says don't believe the priest if he says she won't." Now, I call that "poisoning the wells."

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Aesculapius and his life-guarding principles for medical science, Ecclesiasticus and his magnificent Chapter Thirty-Eight, are a little above the local listening heads, but I do my best to make the issue clear and conscientious.

It is getting late, tomorrow is Sunday, there will be long driving; "the priest" is also a quasi van-driver. But "not too late for the Rosary," says the good old Dad and down we go. Nothing untoward happens during it, except Albert and Johnnie stubbornly insist on sharing the same chair-seat for an elbow rest. There are a few minor scuffles and some fairly suppressed snickers. Not long afterwards wintry silence holds the whole house in its thrall.

## Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

ERIC GILL'S "Autobiography," the latest Catholic Book Club choice (Devin-Adair, $3.50), is in many respects one of the most notable of the volumes sponsored by the club in all the years of its existence. That is quite natural, for Gill's account of his life is a product of the same singular, almost unique quality that saturated all his work with chisel, graver, pencil and pen, in all his diverse activities as a stone-mason and wood-carver and sculptor and etcher and designer of types, and as a pugnacious and vigorous propagandist for his revolutionary ideas and methods in life and work. And his book is certain to be as puzzling to many, perhaps to most of the minds that try to follow and understand his record, as were his productions in the arts and crafts and his contributions to the controversial literature of his times. And that appears paradoxical as did so much of his work and words at all times, when in reality everything he wrought, in whatever medium of expression, was in essence devoid of artificiality, was always honest and frank and straightforward. However, he himself recognizes that in trying to write his autobiography in the same spirit of candor and frankness and truth, he was up against a task far more difficult than he had ever attempted before; a fact inevitably realized by all who essay such a task.

In his preface he sets forth his realization of the fundamental problem of all autobiography. By a coincidence, as I was reading this preface, it chanced that I happened upon another autobiography, a very obscure one, known only to specialists in American colonial and revolutionary literature, Alexander Graydon's "Memoirs." In the preface to that work I found the following passage: "The dealers in self-biography, ever sedulous to ward off the imputation of egotism, seldom fail to find apologies for their undertakings. Some, indeed, endeavor to persuade themselves that they design their labors merely for their own desks; while others, less self-deceived, admit they have an eye for the public. The life of Cardinal de Retz is brought out at the request of a lady; Rousseau, by the desire of showing himself to a misjudging world, in all the verity of nature; Marmontel writes his life for his children at the instance of their mother; and Cumberland, so far as his motives can be collected from his introduction, because he lived and was an author." Just who "Cumberland" was, and what were his other works in authorship, I do not know; but Graydon's remark is very just, for most books in autobiography, as in all other kinds, are merely products of professional industry, especially nowadays when autobiography has become a sort of mass-manufacture rather than a solitary confession.

Eric Gill's preface to his autobiography remarks: "It is exceedingly difficult to know what you really think and what you really feel, and especially what you really thought and felt in the past, and it is even more difficult to put it down in words. How many people have really tried to do so? Jean-Jacques Rousseau tried to, and his book is a most valuable document. But he was a very peevish and disgruntled person, he spent too much space writing his complaints of other people. The same may be said of Monsieur Nicholas Restif; and he was such a liar and braggart. And, to leap from the low to the high, there is Saint Augustine. Yes, the Confessions is the master-work in this line of business, but Saint Augustine had a better and a surer basis on which to write. He was not an upstart philosopher like Rousseau. He could know himself better, know better than Rousseau or Restif what kind of creature it was who confessed. For the question is not only: who am I but what am I?" So Gill reached the conclusion that the only kind of autobiography he could possibly write must be what he called "an autopsychography, a record of mental experience." Believing that nothing particular had ever happened to him "except inside my head," he decided that what reference he would make to physical and exterior doings and events would be but incidental, "the accidents and not the substance of my tale."

He succeeded remarkably well in his very difficult undertaking. Space is lacking for anything like a comprehensive review, but the work is a most valuable contribution to the sincere literature of our age; it is the quintessence of the life-work of a rare genius, a great Catholic, and a pathbreaker.

# Communications

### HISPANIDAD

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editors: In the June 6 issue of THE COMMONWEAL, Alfonso Junco, the distinguished Mexican writer, contributed an article entitled "The United States and Hispanidad," in reply to an article on the same subject by Dr. Edwin A. Ryan, and presenting the Latin American viewpoint on this interesting subject. There is much to be said for the views expressed by both of these writers. Nevertheless, I feel that the true picture is not complete.

Since I still recall with much pleasure meeting Señor Junco in Mexico several years ago, I regret that I must take a stand so different to his. Like Alfonso Junco,

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I am also a Latin American, and lest I be accused of treason, let me remind him at the outset that my family distinguished itself by its strenuous and bitter criticism of the United States. If anyone started out with a prejudice, I did, but, after living many years in this country and studying in its educational institutions, I flatter myself that I know its virtues and faults as well as I do those of my birthplace.

With this preface I should now like to offer my comments on Señor Junco's article. In the first place, I should like to point out that if, as he says, Dr. Ryan's article is permeated by a lack of accuracy and is expressive of distrust, his betrays the same weaknesses.

This inaccuracy is most apparent when he insists that Hispanicism is a purely spiritual movement. No one can possibly quarrel with Hispanicism from the spiritual standpoint, certainly not a daughter of Spain. But to say that it is not being employed today as a political weapon by the totalitarians to attack the United States reveals either misinformation or insincerity. Having met Alfonso Junco, I respect his integrity. Therefore, it is incomprehensible to me that he should not be aware of a situation which is a reality, not only in his own country but throughout Latin America.

Yes, Señor Junco, your desire to see thinking people in the United States sincerely endeavoring to learn the truth about Latin America and its people is already a reality. But what are we doing in return? I am afraid very little. And yet I feel that sound inter-American understanding must be based on reciprocal efforts.

Is Señor Junco unhappy about our independence from Spain that he states that this marked a "disintegration and breakup of what was once a compact and powerful whole into a number of weak entities"? To be hispanically minded, would he turn back the clock more than a century? And is it true that the Spanish colonies were a "compact whole"? I am afraid historians will not agree with him. The colonies were far from being united. Their only unity was their common master. Among themselves, unfortunately, there was none. That is why the greatest American of them all, Simon Bolivar, died a sad and disillusioned man, his vision of a united Spanish America completely shattered.

That the United States encouraged this division and weakness is a purely gratuitous statement on Señor Junco's part. This is the distrust of which he accuses Dr. Ryan, and of which he, himself, is guilty. Why should the United States, a weak and loosely federated republic of thirteen small states, have had any such diabolical designs on Latin America as he suggests? On the contrary, having thrown off the shackles of England, they naturally felt sympathetic toward the desire of the Spanish American colonies for independence! And we must remember that it was Miranda, Bolivar and Carrera who visited the United States in search of aid to win Spanish America's independence.

Señor Junco then proceeds to enumerate certain of the unfortunate incidents which have contributed so much in the past to retard the development of good relations between the United States and its southern neighbors. Frankly, I do not see the purpose of reviving these experiences, since the majority of Americans today deplore them. For example, Professor Dwight Carrol Miner, of Columbia University, recently published a book giving a true and unbiased account of the Panama incident, showing very clearly wherein the United States had been at fault. This is the type of intellectual honesty that must be respected.

Now it seems to me that if he wishes to bring up the past, then he should also speak about the immediate past. This has witnessed the growth of the "good neighbor" policy, the withdrawal of American Marines from all territories in the American Republics where there had been interventions in the past, the abrogation of the Platt Amendment with Cuba, and many other concrete instances of the sincere desire of the people of the United States to amend any wrongs committed in the past, and to develop real understanding and friendship with the other American Republics. The majority of these countries have appreciated this desire, but it must be admitted that there have been exceptions. Without going further, I refer him to the publication of his countryman, Dr. Germán Fernandez del Castillo, entitled "La Propiedad y La Expropración en el Derecho Mexicano Actual," 139 ("Property Rights and Expropriation under Present Mexican Law").

Another contention is that the preponderant manifestations of the United States in its spiritual expansion southward have been unpleasant to Latin Americans.

In this regard, while I deplore with Señor Junco the sectarian American propaganda of which he speaks, I think he would find the majority of the people of the United States sympathetic were we to voice our resentment against this attack on our national faith more forcibly.

Then, along these same lines, he speaks of the spread of corrupt manners and customs, in opposition to the culture and traditions of Latin Americans, which are making great inroads. This is most unfair. The United States does not have a monopoly on such manners and customs. They are just as prevalent in Europe. For example, take one manifestation, the movies. I have seen French movies in Latin America which, frankly, have shocked me as no American movie ever has. Why is the hue and cry never raised against them? Moreover, this unwarranted indictment is unjust to the vast majority of Americans whose standards are every bit as high as those in any of our countries.

Intelligent and understanding Americans have no quarrel with Hispanicism as such, although many, and perhaps justifiably so, may question its importance as a living, vital force to solve Latin America's many problems. However, that is beside the point. What citizens of the United States do protest against, and I must confess that I agree with them, is the use of Hispanicism as a political weapon to attack their country. Any country is justified in protesting against unwarranted attacks; why not the United States?

In summation, I would say that if there is to be real understanding and friendship between the United States and its neighbors to the south, then we must be prepared to study each other's position in a sincere effort to appreciate each position and find common ground on which it

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will be possible to base our relations. If the Latin Americans believe that the people of the United States are sincere in their desire to promote better relations with them, and I for one must say that I do, even though I may not always sympathize with all the steps that are taken to accomplish this objective, then they, too, must make efforts to understand the other side of the picture. This requires constructive thought and constructive action. Thinking Americans will relish such criticism of their efforts by Latin Americans so that they may be better able to realize our common objective. However, then we, too, must be prepared to hear their views.

LULÚ VARGAS VILA.

# *The Screen*

## *You Have Been Here Before*

SOMETIMES it is difficult to figure out the Hollywood mind. Right in the midst of one of the worst slumps in years, when the box office is turning sour, when recent good pictures can be counted on one hand, what does the industry do? Turn out some new, original, bright entertainment? No; they rehash the old stuff, change some names and faces, dish it up, and you can take it or leave it. They forget that only too frequently you do *decide to leave it.*

*"Manpower"* represents a right powerful waste of talent. A good director and cast including three stars play around with a poor excuse for a story and get nowhere. It tries to combine the love triangle of "They Knew What They Wanted" with the rough maleness of "They Drive By Night." (Marlene Dietrich, out after a year in the cooler, works in a clip joint until she marries homely, crippled, well-to-do Boss Edward G. Robinson who loses her to his good pal, smooth George Raft.) The boys in this case are linemen, those unsung heroes whose chief occupation is to go out in storms and mend high tension wires and whose chief diversion is dames. Director Raoul Walsh attempted to work symbolism into the fight between man and nature, but the result is some uninspired performances.

Even the wild and raging storms that the men brave are weak imitations of the real thing. The climax of this exciting but highly unbelievable melodrama is a fight to death between the two friends on top of one of the high powerline structures while the heavens rage with thunder and rain. All this is billed as an original screenplay by Richard Macaulay and Jerry Wald. Original is not the word for it.

The Don Ameche musicals are so much alike that it's hard to tell if one is seeing a new one or old one. But there's one thing about *"Moon Over Miami"*: its title is a dead giveaway; you get what you expect and you don't expect anything brainy in a moon over Miami. Furthermore, early in the picture Betty Grable sings "Miami here I am! You glamor town, begin to glam"; and you know exactly what you're in for. Except for a few shady lines, most of it is good clean fun—artificial and unmental, but fast-moving entertainment with catchy music. It's all done in the brightest technicolor with big, multi-hued production numbers, plenty of dazzling blondeness by Carole Landis and Betty Grable, swaying palm trees and swaying Grable. The funniest and fastest number, "Is That Good?", is danced and sung by Charlotte Greenwood and Jack Haley, two swell comedians. Gold-diggers Betty and Carole come to Florida to land a rich husband; they line up Robert Cummings and Don Ameche, but when Don, as expected, turns out to be looking for riches himself, the usual complications and mixed-up-lovers business occurs. By the time Betty asks, "Is money the real thing?" you wish Director Walter Lang wouldn't fuss around so much with a plot. Anyway we know how it's going to turn out, 'cause last time we saw it, it was called "Three Blind Mice" and Loretta Young and her sisters went through the mill.

Or if it's some synthetic thrills and wild life you want, you can get your fill in *"Frank Buck's Jungle Cavalcade."* This film, making no pretense of being anything new, frankly admits it is a cavalcade of shots from "Bring 'Em Back Alive," "Wild Cargo" and "Fang and Claw." It concentrates on the most exciting episodes of the three and gives one the impression that there's never a dull moment in the Malayan jungle. This business of bringing 'em back alive, even with the temperature at 110 in the shade, is one continuous fight between a tiger and a black leopard, a leopard and a python, Mr. Buck and a python. You have a feeling that some of this has been staged just for you, but that doesn't detract from the fact that this hectic code of fang and claw is enough to give anyone the creeps. There are quieter moments of course as when the honey bear carries on cute or when the monkeys behave like human beings or when the rhinoceros, the orang-utan, the tiger are in turn captured. All this is made more or less entertaining by the appearance of Mr. Buck himself in many of the sequences. And there's a descriptive commentary by the master whose breathless, hurrying voice sounds very much like one of Dwight Fiske's imitations of Mr. B.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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# Books of the Week

## Brownson

*Granite for God's House. Doran Whelan. Sheed and Ward.* $3.75.

WHENEVER the charge is made that the Church in America has produced or attracted very few intellectual leaders, someone is sure to cite Orestes Brownson in rebuttal. In reality he is the exception that proves the rule, and the neglect with which he has been treated by the Catholics only adds emphasis to the charge. To most educated Catholics he is at most a name, and we must ask ourselves how the man who was called the American Newman was allowed to pass into oblivion. The explanation is to be found in the circumstances of his time and in his own character.

Brownson was so completely the child of his age that it was inevitable that much of his fame should pass away with it. Today very few Americans would understand the terms of the great controversies in which he engaged, and their imaginations are unequal to the task of transporting them to an age in which large audiences listened with keen interest to interminable debates on theology. That these debates were advertised for weeks in advance and that the sporting world placed bets on the outcome is almost too much for them to believe. The secularization of American life has gone so far that it is hard to realize now how great a part religion played in this country a century ago. Religious differences were felt deeply, and Brownson's conversion to Catholicism, the last in a series that had first taken him through almost every variety of heresy, was resented by his followers. The Catholics were embarrassed by a convert whose ability was recognized on all sides, but for whom they had no obvious niche.

The difficulties inherent in his position were aggravated by Brownson's personal traits. In addition to a splendid character he had a keen and powerful mind that won him the respect even of Newman. But he was almost entirely self-educated and while this undoubtedly preserved much of his originality, the absence of academic training made it harder for him to get on with his colleagues. His inexactness in the use of technical terms in philosophy and theology exposed him to serious misunderstandings, the effects of which are still felt. The controversies to which they gave rise have perplexed his friends and are a trap for the unwary biographer. After reading both sides of his correspondence it is hard not to feel that his own carelessness is responsible for most of the confusion. His biographer assures us that all his life he suffered from an inability to penetrate circumstances or to see motives behind behavior. Always a leader, he never belonged fully to any group and rarely recognized any equals. He was an unsparing critic and was often surprised to find other people less interested in objective truth than he was. Though he understood the Protestant mind perfectly, he was not so successful with his fellow Catholics. There was a deep gulf separating them culturally. It has been said that Brownson was too Catholic for the Yankees and too Yankee for the Catholics. He was fiercely proud of his New England heritage and deplored without understanding the hostility to it he found among the immigrant Catholics. They in turn regarded his violent Americanism as a crude form of nativism and an implied attack on themselves.

The forces in the American Church that Brownson liked least were led by Archbishop Hughes, and the author gives much space to the conflict between these two masterful personalities. Unfortunately, as in the case of Newman and Manning, it is hard to hold the scales evenly between such giants, and in this account the Archbishop comes off a poor second. Yet in the principal matters in dispute time has vindicated his judgment. Brownson resented what he called the foreign domination of the Church in America. He was constantly pleading for a native clergy who would, he felt, do wonders in converting the country. As a further step in reducing foreign influence he advocated the restriction or elimination of immigration. The foreign born Catholics could hardly help being annoyed by his remarks and felt that they were caused less by an understanding of the real needs of the Church than by the prejudices of the world in which Brownson grew up. They saw proof of this in his extravagant praise of Bishop Spalding simply because that excellent man was born in America. Today most of the clergy are native born and bred, yet the conversion of America is as remote as ever. It would be hard to prove that the elimination of immigration has been really helpful to a group centered in the large cities and without a Catholic rural population from which to draw replacements.

It is a pity that Brownson found no niche in the Church in which he could have devoted himself to explaining the Church to his Protestant countrymen. His magazine lacked adequate financial backing and he had to give too much time to the subscription lists. The misunderstandings he encountered on all sides and the petty meannesses to which some of his critics stooped never made him bitter. His loyalty to the Church was well known in Rome. In spite of a silent conspiracy to ignore him, he was a powerful factor until his death. To the end he was distinguished for his patriotism and love of truth. Above all he prized his membership in the Church, of which he died a most devoted son, lamenting that he had brought her nothing but his sins.

FLORENCE D. COHALAN.

### BIOGRAPHY

*Christopher Columbus. Daniel Sargent. Bruce.* $2.50.

DANIEL SARGENT'S latest work, included in the Science and Culture Series, while by no means his best, is one of the Catholic best. The biographical study, for it is more a study than a mere recitation of chronological facts, is written in the simple and direct style that is Sargent's and deserves credit chiefly for the fact that it does not lengthily repeat the broader outlines of Columbus's life—we all know them anyhow—but intelligently fills in the gaps with details little familiar but of great importance in the making of Columbus the man and Columbus the adventurer.

Sargent's descriptive prowess is demonstrated in his pictures of Portugal, the last stronghold of chivalry; Genoa, cynical and world weary; Spain, conqueror of Islam and thirster after gold.

Portugal's King John II would have none of Columbus. For that matter, why should he? If some unknown from the National Seamen's Union should ask the United States Government to back a trip to the South Pole, he could reasonably expect to be handed a polite "not interested." True, the theory of the world as a globe had a considerable following at the time, but Columbus could give no reasonable assurance that Cathay and the Indies were to be

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found that way. As a matter of fact they could not. Columbus's sales talk, "Gold, Cathay, the Indies, a crusade"—was impressive, far more impressive than was Columbus himself.

The Duke of Medina Sidonia would have liked to make a pirate of Columbus but was afraid of offending Ferdinand. The Duke of Medina Coeli, however, was impressed, and might have helped had not Isabella decided to interest herself and summon Columbus. The Duke had an ancestor, Luis de La Cerda, who had been crowned King of the Canary Islands by Pope Clement VI. The Duke might have succeeded to a throne but for the droll fact that poor Luis had never been able to find his kingdom. During the Duke's time, the Queen of Castile had taken them over.

Ferdinand was not interested in a crusade. He had been talked into one against Granada, and that was enough. But the idea of circumventing the monopoly of the Africa coast, given to Portugal by Pope Calixtus III in 1456, appealed to him. If he was forbidden to round Africa to the Indies; why not go around the globe? He appointed a commission to study Columbus and his ideas. Sargent's terse analysis is typical: " 'Gold, the Indies, a crusade—' Individually the members of the commission may have been interested in 'crusades.' Intellectually they may, some of them, have had a great curiosity about Cathay. Certainly they had an interest in gold."

The commission turned thumbs down. Instead, Ferdinand made Columbus a pawn in his current game with Portugal by persuading him to remain at court, giving him a miserable pittance. Columbus tried once to outwit the king by again going to Portugal with his project. The pawn moving itself. He expected to spur Ferdinand into action. But he was checkmated by the feat of the Portuguese, Bartholomew Diaz, who actually sailed around the Cape of Good Hope. Portugal's monopoly could now bear fruit and there was no longer any interest in the idea of sailing around the world. He returned to Spain. Here, again, he was checkmated. A marriage alliance between Spain and Portugal ended the game by persuading Portugal to share the monopoly. The pawn was useless further.

It was Friar Juan Perez who had every confidence in Columbus and went to court for him. This time the King and Queen were better disposed. Granada had surrendered. Castile was jubilant as eight hundred years of war was ended and a crusade was won. The king was given the title of "Catholic." The rulers could afford to be magnanimous. On September 7, 1492, Columbus sailed from the Canary Islands in search of a route over the sea to the land of the Great Khan.

The rest we know. Sargent describes, vividly and sympathetically, the colonizing, the internal fighting, the low politics that sent Columbus home from a later voyage in chains, a common felon. His heartaches must have been many. We know his rewards were few. The king even tried to take away his dubious title of admiral by lawyers' tricks. In May, 1506, he died, obscure, forgotten and unhonored by those to whom and for whom he had pointed out an empire.

"Realistic" historians, cynical of imperial Spain, of crusades, of anything Catholic, have painted at times the picture in sordid colors. Parts of it were, no doubt. But not Columbus. They credit Columbus with nothing more virtuous than intrepidity. The ideals that inspired many Catholics at the time are described as a cover for the lust for gold. Sargent, while avoiding an actual tilt with them, disagrees. Indeed, like Shakespeare's "ambition," he sometimes "o'erleaps" himself, "and falls on the other side." The book is well annotated and contains a preface by Father Husslein. WILLIAM M. CALLAHAN.

*Lookout. Robert Sparks Walker. Southern Publishers.* $2.00.

THIS book is the written expression of affection for a mountain. Fascinated in his youth by the beauties of Lookout Mountain, in love with the multiple charms of one of the South's most romantic realities of nature, Mr. Walker, best known for his decades of service as editor of *The Southern Fruit Grower,* after long years of delighted intimacy has produced what is intended, apparently, as a paean of praise. It is a paean from which, one regrets to suggest, poetry has vanished. The author calls his work "the story of a mountain." Based upon painstaking research—"not every reader can conceive of the great amount of study, research, and hard labor that is necessary to assemble the dependable data before the author is ready to release his story as being authentic and complete"—motivated by a desire to communicate a personal power to marvel—"accumulating the material for this chapter alone, covers the records of thirty years"—this study has not winnowed the valuable from the useless, the important from the paltry. If one may apply an ancient adage, Mr. Walker, devoted to his subject with an unrestrained love, has been blind to the art of form, deaf to the value of selectivity, dumb to the desire of readers for restraint.

In seventeen chapters there is an attempt to present the whole range and depth of the mountain's treasures: geological, botanical, geographical, historical, recreational, educational, social, religious and economic. The author is no sociologist. The historical portions retell the exciting episodes of Indian encounters of the colonial era, and go over again the facts and the personalities and the results of the battles of Civil War renown. Unfortunately these parts are not done with the acumen of mind or pen naturally expected of such an appreciative practitioner of the craft of writing. As a southerner with ancestors from Tennessee this reviewer, knowing the country from Chattanooga through Georgia to Gadsden, Alabama, is disappointed with Mr. Walker's narrative. In a book intended for general attention it is unfortunate to include an excess of material that may draw grins of recognition and claps of applause from a local George or Marian O'Rear. Many photographic illustrations and several maps add a flair of genuine art to a text that might have been a more brilliant telling of a fascinating story.

DANIEL S. RANKIN.

*The Forgotten Village. John Steinbeck. Viking.* $2.50.

YOU can read "The Forgotten Village" in a half hour. But for a much longer time you will study its 136 photographs and contemplate its message. In the narrow sense, it is a tale of the little pueblo of Santiago in Mexico and the story of a boy and his family and people, "who live in the long moment when the past slips reluctantly into the future." In a broader sense it is the story of modern Mexico with the clash between medicine and magic used as a symbol.

When the children of Santiago become ill, Trini the Wise Woman uses a charm. "My grandfather had it

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from his grandfather and he from his." But the village teacher knows that the water is infected and that medicine is necessary. After the boy Juan Diego's little brother dies, his sister becomes ill; but still the villagers will not listen to the school teacher. Juan walks to the distant city to get medical help. But when the doctor and nurse come with serum and equipment for tests, the villagers hide their children. The doctor disinfects the well. Trini says he has poisoned the water. The villagers drive the doctor away and Juan is thrown out by his father. The boy goes again to the city—this time to study with the boys from other villages who learn so they can carry the knowledge back to their own people. The hope of an ignorant superstitious people is in educated youth who will lead them out of the darkness.

John Steinbeck, temporarily forsaking the hard-boiled writing and editorializing of "The Grapes of Wrath," uses a straightforward, simple narrative style that is an excellent complement to the beautiful photographs of Rosa Harvan Kline and Alexander Hackensmid. If the purpose of this book is to whet our appetites for the forthcoming film, "The Forgotten Village," for which this Steinbeck prose is the script and from which these photograps are taken, it most assuredly succeeds in this intention. However, the evocative book stands on its own merits as an interesting sociological study and as a revealing picture of renascent Mexico. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

CRITICISM

*American Renaissance: Art and Expression in the Age of Emerson and Whitman. F. O. Matthiessen. Oxford.* $5.00.

THIS is a good, solid, meaty book. Reading it is a pleasure, like that of eating a loaf of real French bread with a genuine crust and a fine chewy consistency instead of the tasteless, pallid stuff that the bakers give us in this country. Mr. Matthiessen's method is the opposite of that of Van Wyck Brooks, who used an easy-flowing narrative that brings into its swinging pace nearly every man and title worth remembering at all. This book is concentrated upon five great figures, Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, Melville and Whitman. Its starting point, the author says, was his realization that in the five-year period from 1850 to 1855 the United States produced a series of books such as constitute in themselves a literary period: *Representative Men* (1850), *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), *The House of Seven Gables* (1851), *Moby Dick* (1851), *Pierre* (1852), *Walden* (1854), and *Leaves of Grass* (1855). His aim is to study these books and their authors as artists, both from the standpoint of their own aims and from our perspective.

The best thing that can be said of the result is that the author has no narrow definition of art, but has adopted de Sanctis's view of artistic form and has endeavored to comprehend the whole vital spring of character, feeling and thought which goes into a man's work and the concrete reality of the esthetic form which is its expression. It is a large and generous aim and the result is worthy of it. It is also one which involves covering really as much ground as does Van Wyck Brooks although the field is seen from another vantage point. This, rather than mere prolixity, is the reason for the book's length.

Mr. Matthiessen's method, which he details in the foreword, is a little like that of a skilled cross-examiner who approaches a subject by asking questions from every possible angle. The first and most obvious point of approach is that of the artist's literary relationships, such as that of Thoreau to Emerson. But beyond this he goes into interrelationships that bring up the artist's conceptions of the individual and of society, of good and evil, of the transcendentalists' view of reality, the nineteenth century's identification of the poet and the seer, the influence of the American tradition of oratory upon literary style, as well as relationships forward and backward in time. It is a thoughtful book, the product of ten years' work, and there is no need in a brief review to attempt to summarize its conclusions. Sufficient to say that it is useful and rewarding.

If it has a predominant fault, it is that analysis has outrun synthesis, so that the five authors considered tend to lose their human unity in the wealth of the author's analysis of their art. No matter what complexities and contradictions there may be in a man's mind, a human being is an organic unity. Mr. Matthiessen's style brings out a magnificent wealth of detail, but it tends to blur the general outlines a little too much. The final impression of these studies is one of vague and indefinite extent, like the characterization of a geographic unit such, let us say, as the state of Massachusetts rather than of an individual mind. The author has left me also with one question about his point of view still unresolved, which comes from what may be an unfortunate choice of words or may represent failure to meet a more fundamental problem. He ends on the note of the "need for a mythology," borrowing the term from Emerson's remark "we need a theory of interpretation of mythology." It is a complex and very interesting point that Mr. Matthiessen wishes to make. It involves his belief that we must get away from the rootlessness of modern thought and regain contact with the past. He means by it also that the artist's task is to discern the timeless patterns which persist through the ceaseless flux of human life, to see the universal in the individual. He feels the part which artists play in giving form to the convictions of their people about the nature of life and the meaning of the world, as the heroic myths of the past embody the convictions of primitive men about the origin of the world and the nature of God and man. But he seems (unless I am misled by his choice of the term) to be arguing also from a conviction of the necessity of what one calls in art a standard of values, but in other fields of life, philosophy, ethics, religion. He has arrived at this conviction; but being too self-consciously twentieth century not to be a little afraid of his discovery and of seeming old fashioned and "unrealistic," he solves his embarrassment by calling all this Mythology—yet wants us to take it seriously, too. He is too intelligent a man to take such a position. E. P. RICHARDSON.

FICTION

*The Best Short Stories of* 1941. *Edited by Edward J. O'Brien. Houghton Mifflin.* $2.75.

THE RECENT DEATH of Mr. O'Brien is an occasion for a special tribute in the present volume by Martha Foley who succeeds him as editor of an anthology which, for 27 years, has been one of our most interesting and important literary production. A conscientious foe of that sterile formalism which had for more than two decades eroded the landscape of American fiction, Mr. O'Brien's critical principle has been to search for "the fresh, living current which flows through the best Amer-

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ican work and the psychological and imaginative quality which American writers have conferred upon it." The discoverer of many prominent authors and the promoter of others who had and have been overlooked by more conservative editors, the annual O'Brien collections have introduced Caldwell, Farrell, Wolfe, Steinbeck and Saroyan to wider and more sympathetic audiences than they might have otherwise reached.

Because freshness and vitality is the O'Brien touchstone, many of the selections in this, as in previous annuals, are more intense than they are graceful, more violent than they are reflective and more unsettling than they are assuring. The outstanding paradox of America for some time has been the contradictory messages of her political and her literary commentators; the former group dripping with the honey and oil of progress and civilization, the latter on the whole agonized by the personal and social frustrations of the American people. To read Harold Garfinkel's "Color Trouble," an episode in native racial hatred, or Meyer Levin's fable on the class war, "The System Was Doomed," or Richard Wright's revolutionary "Almos' a Man" is to be jolted into awareness of the subterranean savagery which has long threatened the equlibrium of American society. Similarly the individual unhappiness of the average person, implicitly the result of a materialistic ethics, is strikingly depicted in "Mama Is a Lady" by David de Jong, "The Butcher" by Wilma Shore and "The Psychologist" by Benedict Thielman.

A more optimistic attitude as well as a keener intuition into the realities of life is presented in one of Saroyan's best short stories, "The Three Swimmers and the Educated Grocer," and in John Fante's masterpiece, "A Nun No More." Stephen Vincent Benét contributes a dithyrambic memoir on municipal patriotism, while the European background is very successfully exploited by E. B. Ashton in the love story of a Polish woman called "Shadow of a Girl." Perhaps half of the stories are first rate; none of them is negligible. FRANCIS X. CONNOLLY.

### RELIGION

*The Psalter of the Authorized Version of the Scriptures, set to the Gregorian Psalm Tones and supplied with proper antiphons. Rev. Herbert Lindemann. Augsburg Publishing House.* $1.50.

THE ABOVE TITLE and contents is almost enough to tell our readers what is in store for them. The modern renaissance of psalmod is extending its influence into every Christian denomination (a hateful, but useful term!). The text of the King James Bible has been skilfully handled, although the Cranmer translation in the Book of Common Prayer would seem a little more euphonious. But all such matters are dealt with in the admirable preface in a most succinct manner. It seems strange, however, that the recently published new Lutheran Hymnal (Common Service Book) did not consult Dr. Lindemann, associate pastor of the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in St. Paul and author of this work, on the Gregorian features of such an admirable Hymnal, inasmuch as he would have availed himself (and the editors) of such researches as are now obtainable through the genius of the Monks of Solesmes, to which this editor pays great tribute. He does not hesitate to mention his indebtedness to the *Liber Usualis*, the *Roman Antiphonale* and, last but not least, to the *Antiphonale Monasticum* of such recent date as 1934. This later, and

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## BRIEFERS

*Peace Aims and the New Order. R. W. G. Mackay. Dodd.* $2.00.

THOUGH peace is not yet around the corner, active authors and publishers are already producing books on the political situation after the war. But there is no such thing as peace in the abstract and no possibility of drafting the picture of a new order in Europe without knowing the military situation at the end of the war. Mackay's scheme, bringing Australia, New Zealand and South Africa (but not the USA) into the parliament of a federation of European states and restoring the political frontiers before the war, would only be possible after a total victory of the British, and without American help. Besides this you may feel doubtful whether the frontiers of Versailles were just and wise enough to deserve restoring. Nevertheless the book is stimulating for discussions of future political problems. M. F.

*Stanford Studies in Language and Literature. Edited by Hardin Craig. Stanford University.* $3.50.

UNTIL you can look at the table of contents, this book—like all such volumes of "Studies"—has the disadvantage of being anonymous both as to authors and subjects. The titles of the individual essays, however, are more piquant, and the book will reward interest. Some of the articles, like the account of "An extraordinary example of Spanish ballad tradition in New Mexico" by Aurelio M. Espinosa, are destined mainly for the delight of specialists; in style, a few are somewhat perfunctory. But the essay on "Shakespeare, Southampton and Avisa" by Henry David Gray, and that on "The criticism of Gulliver's 'Voyage to the Houyhnhnms" by Merrel D. Clubb are written with charm. Kurt F. Reinhardt's informative and penetrating study of "The cultural background of the literary baroque in Germany" is an example of vital scholarship. And there is profit and pleasure for the average reader in such essays as "Familiar figurative English expressions" by William Hawley Davis, "Milton's scale of nature" by Walter Clyde Curry, "An American performance of *The Cenci*" by Arthur C. Hicks, "Henry Adams's quest for certainty" by Robert A. Hume.

A. J. S.

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# The Inner Forum

THE CALVERT CLUB, Catholic student organization at the University of Chicago, was inaugurated when the eminent political scientist, Dr. Jerome G. Kerwin, joined the faculty there eighteen years ago. At that time, too, the Calvert Associates were founding THE COMMONWEAL, hence the name. Year after year Dr. Kerwin, in the absence of a chaplain, has been a friend of the organization and an adviser to Catholic students.

Catholic life on the Chicago campus was stimulated when President Hutchins and his friend and collaborator, Mortimer J. Adler, came to the university. The problems which keep many people out of the Church today or cause the loss of Faith are, explicitly or implicitly, philosophical and intellectual. They are really problems of epistomology, psychology and ontology. And it is Hutchins's and Adler's devotion to these problems in the celebrated "Great Books" course which has done so much to set students thinking straight. Many a student has thought himself straight into the Church.

In order of importance the aims of the Calvert Club are spiritual, liturgical, intellectual and finally, social. Many of its directors and members go to Mass daily and receive daily Communion; they attempt, seriously, to live as Catholics should.

As one means of promoting its four-fold objective, the club sponsors well-attended weekly luncheons to which are invited prominent speakers. "The Place of Doubt in a Student's Education," "The Case for the Catholic Conscientious Objector," "Catholics and Democracy," "The Scholastic Method as a Habit of Mind," "The Catholic Worker: Radical Christianity," "Third Orders and Catholic Life," "The Negro Apostolate in Chicago"—these are a few titles of this year's luncheon talks. At the close of the luncheon a priest, or often one of the students, reads the Collect from the Mass of the day, comments briefly thereon, and Grace is said.

Again, several times each quarter, the Calvert Club presents outstanding Catholic thinkers in afternoon lectures open to the entire student body. This year, for example, Jacques Maritain spoke on "Cooperation and the Diversity of Creeds." The Rev. Gerald B. Phelan of the Pontifical Institute for Medieval Studies, Toronto, lectured on "Education in the Ages of Faith." An illustrated public lecture on the Trappist Abbey at Gethsemani, Kentucky, and a series of sessions on problems of Christian marriage interested many students.

The outstanding social function of the past year was the observance of the Feast of Saint Thomas Aquinas. Henceforth it is to be an annual affair. The celebration began in the morning with a Missa Cantata. Arrangements for the Mass were made by the members of the Third Order of St. Dominic associated with the University, and who invited the students to join them. Having classes to attend during the day, club members dispersed after their Communion breakfast, but gathered again at six o'clock for a banquet in one of the University's Gothic recreation halls. After the banquet, two-minute talks were made by several speakers. Then, in a great prayer of Thanksgiving, the whole group sang Saint Thomas's chant, *Adoro Te Devote.*


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Through the graciousness of one of the club's patrons, a country estate has for several years been made available for outings. The estate includes three residences, with accommodations for housing and feeding fifty, a small chapel and a well-stocked library. It is the plan of the Calvert Club to go to Childerley, as the estate is named, for a three-day outing during each of the autumn, winter and spring quarters, while smaller groups of students will organize study week-ends there throughout the year.

At the conference held at Childerley this spring, the students arrived on a Friday evening, and after refreshments and group singing, recited compline in the chapel, and retired. Saturday morning began with a Missa Recitata, while the remainder of the morning and afternoon was taken up with conferences on the importance of the liberal arts in a Catholic's education, and an analysis of the heresies in "Mein Kampf." Since it is customary to invite priests to every conference—some conferences indeed have been semi-retreats—there was ample opportunity for consultation and confession. On Sunday was celebrated the recent gift of the estate to the club. A hundred extra guests were invited for the day, most of whom arrived in time to assist at the Missa Cantata. The time before dinner was devoted to two conferences, one on Valtin's "Out of the Night," by Rev. George Dunne, S.J., and the other on Philosophy and the Spiritual Life, by Dr. Yves Simon of Notre Dame. Dinner was followed by a procession in which all chanted the *Litany of the Blessed Virgin*, while buildings, chapel and library were blessed. The chant of the *Te Deum* ended the day.

The presence in the University of even a few intellectually alert and spiritually fortified Catholic students has been a great influence for good. Even those who seek to offer the strongest opposition to the Church are now led to study more attentively her teachings and history because they now must meet her competent and insistent supporters. And there have been conversions. Among them, one, after first having become a psychiatrist, entered the Trappist order this past Easter. Another will enter the Dominican order in August, and a third will begin his study for the secular priesthood in September.

The Calvert Club, however, still has work to do. Of the six hundred Catholic students in residence on the campus, only one hundred and fifty regularly attend club functions. A great apostolate lies ahead, first among Catholic students, and then among the 7,200 non-Catholic students of the University. JEROME TAYLOR.

## *CONTRIBUTORS*

*Helen ISWOLSKI* is the daughter of the former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Ambassador to France of the Tsarist government; she has long lived in France and interested herself in the Catholic intellectual life of that country.
*Jessica POWERS* has just entered the novitiate of a religious order.
*Donald ATTWATER* sends another of his stimulating comments on the state of the world from his Welsh home.
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